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MEMOIRS

OF

MRS. ELIZABETH FISHER,

OF THE

CITY OF NEW-YORK,

Daughter of the Rev. Harry Munro, who was a Chaplain in the British Army, during the American Revolution.—Giving a particular account of a variety of domestic misfortunes, and also of her trial, and cruel condemnation to the state's prison for six years, at the instance of her brother,

PETER JAY MUNRO.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

Neither the perfidy of private friendship, nor the persecution of relatives, nor the frowns of the world, nor domestic calamity, nor time, nor circumstance, can shake the mind that is armed with conscious virtue.

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MEMOIRS

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MRS. ELIZABETH FISHER.

THE Rev. Harry Munro, my father, was a native of Scotland. After receiving his education, he was appointed Chaplain to the 77th regiment of foot, commanded by General Montgomery, and was sent to America at the conclusion of the war, in the year '59. My father became acquainted with the widow of an officer who belonged to the same regiment; this widow became wife to my father and mother to me. I was born in Philadelphia, the second day of December, 1759; my mother died three days after my birth, and left me to the care of my father, who soon procured a wet nurse for me in Burlington, a quaker lady, with whom I remained till my father married the second time, and took up his residence in Princeton, New-Jersey. I was then taken home to my step-mother; I became very fond of her, as she was fond of me, and soon forgot my nurse. Eleven months after her marriage she was delivered of a son. Some time after her recovery, my father took it into his head to go home to England to be ordained for the church of England, preferring that to the church of Scotland. He took his leave, with an intention of taking passage from New-York; but a few days after his departure from home, my

step-mother was taken with a fit, and expired in a few minutes. A servant was sent off in haste to New-York to inform my father of what had happened ; when the servant came to the ferry the wind was so high that the boat could not cross that night ; the next day my father heard the melancholy news—the death of a woman whom he loved ; it was customary in those days to bury the dead after candlelight ; when my father came home, my mother's corpse was gone to the place of interment—I remember my father wept bitterly. The next day my nurse was sent for from Burlington, and my little brother and myself were given into her care. My father took his departure for England. A few months after my father's absence the nurse was alarmed by seeing the child in a fit ; the doctor was sent for, but in vain, the child was soon a corpse. When my father arrived from London, and the nurse informed him of the death of his son, his feelings were deeply wounded. He left me in the care of the nurse, and came to New-York, having letters of recommendation to Doctor Auchmuty, then minister of the old Trinity Church ; he insisted on my father's making his home with him till some place should become vacant. Accordingly my father did so, and he frequently by invitation preached for the doctor, in several of the protestant churches in New-York. Preaching one Sunday in the old Trinity Church, by request of Doctor Auchmuty, a widow by the name of Chambers, being one of the doctor's congregation, came to hear my father preach ; she brought with her Miss Jay, who was her niece ; my father, being a handsome man, soon commanded the attention of that lady ; he was often invited to dine at the widow Chambers', where Miss Jay first got acquainted with my

father ; she became very fond of him, although he was a stranger, and I have heard my father say that she was very unhappy when he was out of her sight. My father, being informed that Miss Jay was a lady of respectability and fortune, was advised by his friend, the doctor, to pay his addresses to her ; which he did, and the marriage day was soon fixed on. They became man and wife ; and, as all the family were pleased with the marriage, my father expected something handsome from her father, Mr. Peter Jay ; but he was much disappointed. Mr. Jay never gave him any thing excepting some furniture. Miss Jay was considerably advanced in years. Some time after marriage, my father was appointed minister at Philips' Manor. After they removed there, I was sent for. My nurse brought me home from Burlington, to my step-mother. The nurse stayed a few days with me, and then returned home to her family. I remember I fretted much after she left me, as my step-mother began to be very cross to me. When my father was from home, she would for the least misconduct, whip me, then lock me up in the cellar for a whole day, without giving me either victuals or drink. The servants would sometimes send me refreshments through the cellar window. Often in this situation have I cried myself to sleep ; and whenever my father and she had any dispute, she would revenge herself on me. When near her time, being ten months after marriage, she went to her fathers, who lived at Rye, and took me with her, where I remained all winter under the care of her mother and sister, who were kind to me. On the tenth day of January, 1766, she was delivered of a son, who was baptised by my father a few days after his birth, and named Peter Jay Munro.

after his grandfather, he standing god-father for him. This event caused great joy in the family, as he was the first grandchild. In the spring, we all returned home, and it became my business to rock the cradle; he being very cross, I was frequently whipt because I could not quiet him. Her ill treatment of me was incessant, for I never was without marks of her cruelty; she would pinch me till my flesh turned black, and then lock me up in the cellar till I almost perished for want of food. I am confident that if the servants had been as destitute of feeling as she was, I must have died. My father and she soon began to live unhappy, he finding himself disappointed in getting a fortune by her; and what contributed to increase it, she was neither handsome nor agreeable in any respect whatever—of a most desperate temper, she possessed no qualification of a lady; the longer they lived together, the more unhappy they seemed to be.

My father, having some words with Mr. Philips, removed from there to Albany. The cruelty of my step-mother still continued, until, at length, the neighbours informed my father of her conduct towards me. He forbid her correcting me, and told her, that if I needed correction, he would do it; but this admonition failed of success, for whenever he was from home, which was often the case, I would experience her cruelty in as great a degree as ever; at last, as nothing else would do, my father boarded me out, and sent me to school. The hard usage I had received from her, had such an effect on my constitution, that the doctor, believing me to be in a decline, advised my father to have me removed to the country.

My father had a patent of land granted him for his services as chaplain in the army; this entitled him

to two thousand acres, which he drew in a place now called Hebron, in the county of Washington. As he wished to settle tenants on this patent, he went to this place in May 1775, and took me with him to spend the summer season. I had not been long there, before I perfectly recovered my health, and was much delighted with this change, being at liberty to range the woods as I pleased; my time was chiefly spent in seeking birds eggs, and catching little fish with a pin hook. My father provided a companion for me, a girl about my age, who went with me every where I pleased to go. The summer being past, my father said to me one day, Betsey, my dear, we must think of going home to Albany, the winter is coming on, and if you are a good girl, you shall come here again next summer. We were at dinner when my father spoke these words to me. After he went out, I went to my bed and wept bitterly; to think of returning to my cruel step-mother, appeared to me worse in anticipation than death. I begged of my father to leave me in the country. I told him I did not wish to go home to my step-mother. My father seemed hurt at my expressions, and said he would endeavour to get me board in a decent family, for the winter season, which he did. He was acquainted with a Mr. William Reid, who lived in a place now called Salem, in the county of Washington. I went there to spend the winter; my father took his leave of me, saying he believed he could not see me again till spring, as he had business in Philadelphia, which would detain him some time there. I was perfectly happy, because I had not to return to my step-mother. On my father's road to Albany, he stopped at the house, of a Scotch-

man, by the name of Duncan Campbell, here he remained some days, the weather being very stormy ; during which, Mr. Campbell suggested his wishes to my father respecting his eldest son's paying his addresses to me, to which my father consented. Mr. Campbell lived five miles from where I was boarding. In a few days after my father's taking his leave of me, I received a letter from him on this subject :

" Argyle, November 7th, 1775.

" MY DEAR BETSEY,

The badness of the weather has prevented me from proceeding on my journey. I have been these five days at Mr. Campbell's, but this day I shall take my departure from hence. My dear child, Mr. Campbell has requested the favour of me to consent that his son, Alexander Campbell, should pay his addresses to you ; I have given my consent : now let me beg of you to receive Mr. Campbell as a gentleman. I have likewise written to Mr. Reid, desiring him to pay every attention to him when he visits you.

Your affectionate Father,

HARRY MUNRO."

When Mr. Campbell paid his visit I was surprised that my father could consent to his coming to see me.—He was about six feet high, and forty-five years of age—no teeth, and grey hairs ; of course, I could not like him. After a few visits he asked me to marry him. My answer was no. What does he do but go to Albany to see my father, in order to ask permission to make me his wife !

though he failed of getting mine, he obtained my father's consent, and immediately bespoke his wedding clothes. He prevailed on my father to write me a letter, informing me what had been done. On his return he came to see me, and spent the afternoon; after tea we took a walk some distance from the house, when he told me he had a letter for me from my father, and took out his pocket book and gave it to me.—Anxious to return to my lodgings, to learn the contents of the letter, I excused myself, and went to my bed-room to read it.—The contents were as follows :

“ Albany, December 3d, 1775,

“ MY DEAR BETSEY,

“ Mr. Alexander Campbell is here with me, and has asked my consent for you to be his wife ; I have given my consent, providing his father will make over that part of his estate, that he now lives on, to his son, that in case of his son's death, his widow and children may have something to depend on ; which request Mr. Campbell assures me, will be immediately complied with by his father ; therefore, my dear child, as soon as this is done, I shall expect you to come to Albany with Mr. Campbell, to my house, to be joined in wedlock to a man whom I esteem as a good man and a gentleman ; and if you refuse your consent, you must not expect forgiveness from me.

Your affectionate Father,

HARRY MUNRO.”

When I received this letter, I was astonished at Mr. Campbell's conduct, to get my father's consent before he had obtained mine ; as Mr. Campbell was the bearer of this letter, I read it in his presence, and my answer to him was this—" Sir, as you have courted my father, you may marry him, for I will never marry you."—This soon came to my father's ears; I knew not what to do, I feared he would send for me home, which I dreaded—I was in great distress, knowing not what method to take to avoid the displeasure of my father, as I was very fond of him.—Some time before I left Albany to go into the country my father had purchased two small lots of land about half a mile from the city of Albany, on one he built a store house, on the other a dwelling house, where we lived. As I before mentioned, my father and step-mother lived very unhappy ; they had separate beds for each other, which is a bad sign ; her heart and soul were in her son. We had a large garden, and she was fond of spending her time in planting and transplanting. One day I remember she was setting out cabbage plants, and had set out a great number, she held the stick she made use of in setting them out in her hand, and began to count them, when her little son came behind her and began to count after her ; this made her make a mistake several times in counting, she bid him be quiet several times, but he did not mind her ; at last she got in a passion and knocked him down with the stick. As soon as he fell she called for the wench to come, and told her she was afraid she had killed her child ; the wench took him up in her arms and carried him into the house and he soon recovered. That evening as he and his mother were sitting together, his mother was telling a story to the servant maid concerning gov-

ernor Colden hanging himself in his garden with his pocket handkerchief because he was in great trouble ; her little son Peter paid attention to her story ; I have often seen him sit and look her in the face, and at the end of every sentence his little head would give a nod. The next day as he seemed to be very dull, she asked several times if he was sick, he said no ; about twelve o'clock he went to the kitchen, and asked the wench to give him the small cord that hung in the kitchen ; she asked him what he was going to do with it, he said he was going to play in the back yard. He took this cord and his little bench that he had to sit on (for he was a child about six years of age) and went back of a wood pile that was in the back yard, in which was a piece of wood that stuck out farther than the others—he stood on his bench and tied one end of the cord to this stick and the other end round his neck, then went on his knees by his little bench to pray—the wench, seeing what he was about, called his mother, and the cord was taken off and he carried into the house—his mother was almost crazy ; my father was from home. She asked him what made him try to hang himself ; “ why governor Osborn, hung himself when he was in trouble, and I was going to hang myself, because you knocked me down in the garden yesterday.” She was greatly alarmed for fear he would attempt it again. In a few days my father came home, and she informed him of what had happened, who said he ought to be corrected for such conduct—he called for him and whipt him for it ; his mother was so angry because my father whipt him, that she said she would cut her throat with her penknife, but thinking better of the business, she only fell down in

a fit, and was confined to her room a few days.—My brother, from the time he was ten years old has been under the care of the Jay family, as they are his relations.

I had no relations.—I had to seek my living among strangers. In the month of Janury, 1776, Mr. Fisher became acquainted with me. The first time I saw him was at a meeting.—Mr. Fisher being in the same regiment with my father, was very desirous of getting acquainted with me. He took his lodgings in the same house in which I boarded, where he was informed of what had passed concerning Mr. Campbell, my father, and myself. He made Mr. and Mrs. Reid his confidants and told them that he would reward them handsomely if they would endeavor to get me to consent to permit him to visit me; they soon by persuasion gained my consent to see Mr. Fisher. After he had been introduced by Mrs. Reid, she said that she and her husband had been acquainted with Mr. Fisher many years, that he was a good man, and a man of property, and would make a better husband to me than the man my father wished me to have.—Being young and unexperienced in life, I soon was made to believe that I should do well by marrying Mr. Fisher; I must confess I had no affection for him. The thoughts I had upon the subject were these: I shall have some one to take care of me—I shall have a home—I shall never be a trouble to my father, for surely he wants to be quit of me, or he would not have been so angry with me for refusing Mr. Campbell; and another thing which had great weight on my mind, was, that I should be out of my step-mother's power. After I gave consent to Mr. Fisher, I sent Mr. Reid to my father to acquaint him of Mr. Fisher's

intentions towards me, and wished him to consent to our marriage, which he refused, and was much displeased with me. He sat down and wrote me a severe letter, as follows—

“ BASE, UNWORTHY CHILD,

“ What could tempt you to ruin yourself and break your father’s heart ? I never will consent to your marriage with Mr. Fisher, for many reasons—he is too old for you, and he is no gentleman. If you take any rash steps, your blood be on your own head.—I never will own you as my child, or give you one shilling portion. I thought you was a girl of more good sense and a better spirit than to throw yourself away on the like of Mr. Fisher.

Your offended Father.

HARRY MUNRO.”

“ To Miss Elizabeth Munro.”

My father at the same time forbid Mr. Reid letting Mr. Fisher see me ; but that was in vain, for we were engaged.—When Mr. Reid returned and informed me what had passed between him and my father concerning me, I was almost distracted, I loved my father, and wished to please him.—At one time I was for running away, at another for drowning myself ; at last, however, I told Mr. Fisher, I could not marry him altho’ I had promised so to do. I then informed him of what had passed between Mr. Reid and my father, I likewise showed him my father’s letter to me. Mr. Fisher’s feelings were hurt at my father’s expressions against him ; and he said he did not care for any portion my father could give ; all he wanted was me, and my consent to be his wife ; he would make over all his property to me, which was done. I considered for a few days what

was best for me to do ; I concluded to consent to marry him. Mr. Fisher went to New-York and got a licence from governor Tryon, and on the second day of Febuary, 1776, I went with Mr. Fisher to Albany, and was married by Mr. Vesterlowe, a Dutch minister ; I never went to see my father, but returned with Mr. Fisher to the country. No one was present at our marriage but 'Squire M'Alester who took us to Albany in his sleigh. Mr. Fisher then took me among his relations who resided on land that belonged to him. These people had the year before come from Scotland, some of them could not speak a word of English—here I was unhappy, but said nothing—sometimes Mr. Fisher would find me in tears, and wished to know the cause, but I would not tell the reason, for the reason was, I hated him and all his relations, for every thing they said and did was strange to me, and disagreeable. One day as I was walking in the wood, (for it was all wild, very little improvement having been made at that time, being new beginners,) I began to reflect on what I had done. I walked about a mile from the house, and sat myself down at the side of a large creek, where the water seemed to be deep ; here I began to sum up all my troubles, and was fully determined to drown myself. I sat thinking and crying with my clothes unpinned, ready to jump in ; the sun was near setting, I then lay myself down on the bank to rest, for I felt much fatigued, and instead of jumping into the creek, I fell asleep, with my gown turned over my head. I slept from sun down till ten o'clock at night, when I was surprised by Mr. Fisher raising me up in his arms, and asking me how I came there, and what I meant by going so far from home ; I told him I had got lost ;

observing my clothes all loose, he asked me how they came so—to which I gave no direct answer. We went home ; I slept but little that night, for I was very unhappy. The next morning he informed me, that when he came home the day before, he asked where I was, but no one could give any tidings of me, as the last that had been seen of me was about three o'clock, walking in a field at some distance from the house ; as night came on, my not appearing alarmed him very much—he went on the top of the house and blew the horn ; but seeing no appearance of me, they at last set out to seek me, and came to the place where I was—it being dark, they saw something on the ground that looked black, and when they came up found it was me, fast asleep. When I awoke I did not know where I was.

We lived among Mr. Fisher's relations till the latter end of April, without hearing any thing from my father. A few days after the affair above related, I was standing at his brother's door, when Mr. Reid came and handed Mr. Fisher a letter to read ; the letter was written to Mr. Reid, the contents were these :—" Sir, I wish you to go to Mr. Fisher, and tell him to go to my patent and take his wife with him, and take possession of my house and farm and every thing that is there, as I am not satisfied that my daughter is living with his people." Mr. Fisher, remembering what had passed, was unwilling to go ; he did not wish to be beholden to my father ; but I was rejoiced at the news, and could not rest till he went with me there. I must say that Mr. Fisher was fond of me, and as I had lived there the summer before with my father, I thought it would seem like home to me ; so we went there the first of May. Mr. Fisher took with him his father,

his half brother, a nephew and a niece, and we had a boy of my father that was bound to him till he was of age—this constituted our family. The house was furnished and the farm stocked. As Mr. Fisher did not understand farming, all his business was left to other people. In June, as the people were mowing grass, Mr. Fisher having nothing to do, in order to amuse himself, gathered some small sticks which had fallen from the trees that stood near the barn, to which he set fire; it now being near dinner time, the horn was blown for them to come.—While sitting at dinner, a smoke was observed coming round the house, they ran to the door, and, to their surprise, they saw the barn on fire; the barn was filled with wheat and hay of the year before. The fire, it seems, had been communicated from the brush Mr. Fisher had kindled, to the straw that was scattered around, and by that means conducted to the barn, and soon set it into a light blaze. They all ran to get out some calves that were confined, but could not; the barn was consumed in a few minutes,

So much for Mr. Fisher's work.—We did not raise enough to support our family—we spent the summer gaining nothing. On the 14th of November, 1776, I was put to bed of a fine son. During the winter I was confined to my room with a broken breast; the child was very healthy. At this time Burgoyne came down with his army to Skeensborough; this put the country all in confusion; knowing not what to do, colonel Williams, being a head man on the side of the country, came to Mr. Fisher, and begged of him, as he had been in the British army, to go and procure a protection for him and all the committee in Salem, and, says he, I will send

John Baker with you, that if you should be kept, Baker can return and inform us what is best to be done. Accordingly Mr. Fisher took leave of his family, and went to see General Burgoyne ; he made known his errand, and sent Baker back with the result to Colonel Williams. I expected Mr. Fisher home every day.

A few days after Baker's return, a party of riflemen surrounded our house, about six o'clock in the morning, and inquired for Mr. Fisher. I told them he was not at home ; they asked me where he was gone—I told them ; upon which they ordered me out of my house, with a threat that if I did not immediately comply they would burn me in it. I took my child from the cradle and went out of the house.—I sat down at a little distance, and observed them taking out all my furniture, and then they burnt the house. In this situation, without a home and no one near me to whom I could apply for advice or assistance—not knowing where nor which way to go to find Mr. Fisher, I was at a loss what to do.—At last, seeing a man drive a cow, I asked him which way he was going.—He answered to the camp.—I asked him if he would let me go along with him.—Yes, said he, if you can keep up with me. I arose from the ground (for I was sitting down with my child on my lap) and followed him. I walked that day, in company with this man, twenty-two miles, and carried my child ; by the middle of the day I had neither shoe nor stockings on my feet ; my shoes, being made of silk, did not last long, and my stockings I took off and threw away, on account of the fatigue of carrying my child and walking so far.—I was willing to lay down and die. On the road this man would often say that he did not know but a party of In-

dians might be out a scouting, and if so, we should fall a sacrifice to them ; at first I was alarmed, but my fatigue at length was so great that I told him I wished they might come and kill me and my child, for I was almost exhausted. I had nothing to eat or drink all that day, except the water he gave me out of the brooks with his hat. We saw several houses, but the people had fled from them. About sunset we came to a house where we found a woman and seven children. Her husband had gone—I stayed there that night ; the next day the man went with his cow into the camp ; this cow was all he had, and he wanted to sell her for money. I sent by him to Mr. Fisher, letting him know where I was. Mr. Fisher came to me that evening, and the next day I went into the camp. After I had been a few days in the camp, I bought every thing my child and I needed. I related to Mr. Fisher what had been done at home—he was much surprised at Williams' conduct, as he had sent him, and the men that burnt the house were under his command—my furniture was sold at his house as tory property. We then concluded to remain in the British army ; we stayed in the camp till Burgoyne capitulated. In October following, I was eye witness to the two last battles at Stillwater—I was eye witness to the death of General Frazer—I was in the same house with him—I saw his death and burial. After we were defeated we saw hard times ; provisions were scarce, and not to be had for money. I must now give you some account of what passed from the time of our retreat till the capitulation took place. We retreated after the last battle to Saratoga, where we encamped a small distance from the river, to prevent their cannon having any command over us—having

nothing to do, waiting General Burgoyne's orders. We were deprived of all comforts of life, and did not dare to kindle fire for fear we should be observed from the other side of the river, and they might fire on us, which they did several times. Being about the middle of October, we suffered cold and hunger; many a day I had nothing but a piece of raw salt pork, a biscuit, and a drink of water—poor living for a nurse. At this time I had my child at my breast, being eleven months old. One day, wearied of living in this manner, I told some of the soldiers' wives if they would join me, I would find out a way to get some provision cooked—seven of them joined me. I spoke to some of the soldiers that were invalid, and told them if they would make up a fire back in the wood, and get a large kettle hung on, we would fill it with provision, and cook it, which would last us some time. They consented to do it for a guinea; they went to work and built up the fire, hung on the kettle, and put water in it, then we women put in what we pleased; we soon filled it with a variety; it began to boil; we all kept a distance from the fire for fear of the cannon that were placed on the other side of the river on a high hill; they soon discovered our fire, and saluted us with a cannon ball; it struck and broke our kettle to pieces, and sent the provision in the air. We met with no hurt only losing our intended feast. The soldiers demanded their pay, which I paid; but as the disappointment was so great, the rest declined paying any thing, saying they had lost enough by losing their provision, so for my folly I had to pay for all.

A few days after the capitulation took place, when I saw the troops lay down their arms, I was glad, for I was

wishing to get out of the camp. Mr. Fisher said he should go to Canada. I refused going with him, and went back to Hebron, where I meant to have stayed. Mr. Fisher proceeded on his way to Canada. On his arriving at Diamond Island, he met my father, who asked for me. Mr. Fisher told him that I was not willing to go to Canada, at which my father was angry, and said he must go back and bring me and the child. Mr. Fisher came for me and told me what my father had said. I was surprised that my father should insist on my going to Canada, as I never had spoken a word to him since my marriage with Mr. Fisher. To please him I went, and when we got to Diamond Island my father was gone on his way. The next day we followed and overtook him at Mount Independent; he was walking in company with General Powell. When we landed, he came and took me by the hand and kissed me, and looking at my child, he asked me if I had named him, I told him I had not; you must, says he, call him after me. This was the first time I had seen or spoke to my father since my marriage; he likewise told me he would see me in Montreal. The next day we all set off to cross Lake Champlain; the season of the year being far advanced, and going to the northward, we found it very cold and stormy. We were eleven days on the lake, in an open boat, it snowed and rained every day; we slept on shore every night on the ground, as there were no inhabitants on that side of the Lake in those days, for they had fled on account of the war. On the 22d day of November we landed in Montreal. As the river St. Lawrence was almost frozen over, we found it exceedingly cold.

I named my son *Harry Munro Fisher*. When we came to Montreal, we found the town very much crowded, and house-rent and fire wood high. As we had nothing to do, we hired some rooms and lived with a French family that winter; the next spring we bought a house and began business. My father boarded with Mr. John Thomson, a Scotchman; but as soon as he had got into comfortable lodgings, he was taken very bad with a cold, and for six weeks we did not expect he would recover. I went every day to see him, and to do some little things for him. One day as I was combing his head, he asked me if Mr. Fisher had any money by him, I said he had; do you think, says he, Mr. Fisher would let me have some. I answered I did not know, but I would ask him. I told Mr. Fisher what my father said; well, says he, Betsey, you have my money in keeping, you may act your own pleasure with your father. The next day when I went to see my father, I told him Mr. Fisher was willing to let him have what he wanted; he said he would not want any till the spring, when he was going home to London. Several times he would ask me if I was contented with my husband; I always said yes; God knows I was not; but I was ashamed to confess to my father that I was exceedingly unhappy. On the first day of January, 1778, being New Year's day, I took my child and went to see my father. I stayed with him the greater part of the day; on coming away he put a guinea into the child's hand, and said he wished he was able to give him something more. My father continued to be very much afflicted with sickness during all that winter. He would frequently ask me how Mr. Fisher was, but never invited him to see him. One day as we were sitting alone, he said to me, Betsey,

you have made a bad choice in a husband ; Mr. Fisher is old enough to be your father, and you must expect sooner or later to be left a widow, and perhaps with a family of small children, unprovided for. He often said to me I will endeavour to give you something before I leave you. I told this to Mr. Fisher. What can he give you, said Mr. Fisher, when he wants to borrow money to take him home. If he should offer you any money, continued Mr. Fisher, do not take it ; you do not want it, for we can help ourselves. Not long after my father said to me, Betsey, I intend to give you a deed of my patent of land, for you and your children, in case you should become a widow, that you may have something to depend on. I told him I did not want it ; for Mr. Fisher had forbid me accepting any thing from him, as we did not stand in need. It is not to Mr. Fisher I mean to give it, it is to you and your children. I shall give it to you before I go, but I wish you to say nothing about it to him. I will also leave you my servant boy, he can wait on your child—which he did. On the 12th day of February, 1778, he gave me a deed of his patent, telling me to take care of it, but never to say any thing concerning it till after his head was laid in the grave. I took it, but thought no more of it than I would of a piece of blank paper. The 6th of May, as he was going to Quebec, on his way to London, he came to see me, and drank tea with Mr. Fisher and myself. Mr. Fisher asked him if he wanted some money, he said yes, he wished to have what he could spare, and asked what business we meant to follow. Mr. Fisher told him he intended to import goods the next year. Well, says my father, you may send your orders home to me, and you shall have your goods sent you ; he then

took what cash he wanted, for which he gave a note, and then took leave of us. That year we bought a house, and sent an order home to my father for goods. When the shipping arrived, there were no goods, not even a letter, from which we concluded that the old gentleman was dead. The year following we got Mr. William Aird, a Scotch merchant, to import goods for us, paying ten per cent. commission; the goods came, and every year after that we got our goods from him. We heard not a word from my father from the time he went home, which was in the year '78, till '86.

We remained in Montreal and did business to great advantage; but I was still unhappy, for as my husband advanced in years, his temper grew peevish, and he was very unhappy. I often asked him what was the cause of his unhappiness; he said that when he looked at me and his dear little children, he was almost distracted, knowing he must soon leave us; and at the same time made this observation, that if he could be so fortunate as to leave us independent, he would die happy. He now began to neglect his business, thinking he could make more money by buying and selling lands. At this time I was mother of four children, two sons and two daughters. I endeavoured to discourage Mr. Fisher from his intended proceedings. In the year 1786, a gentleman by the name of Covel, who was a captain in the British army, called on me and told me he had just arrived from London, where he had seen my father, and had dined with him several times; he told me that my father had given him a letter to deliver to me with his own hand, which he did. I was happy in hearing that my father was living, although his conduct was not so pleasing as I

wished. When the captain went away I opened my letter and read it. The contents were these : he informed me of his having put in his claim to government for his losses in America, wishing me to procure the affidavits of three respectable men, who were acquainted with his landed property in America. I got Mr. Alexander Campbell, my once intended husband by my father, and Mr. James Campbell, his brother, and Alexander Fisher, those three men, being acquainted with the land, went before Judge Frazer, of Montreal, and appraised the 2,000 acres of land on oath, at 5 dols. per acre ; this being done, I enclosed the affidavits in a letter to my father, which he received. He made no apology in his letter for not writing to us before, and I never asked him the reason why he did not, but it caused me many a tear.

In the month of February, '87, Col. Jessup came from London to Montreal, and brought me a letter from my father, wherein he acknowledged the receipt of my letter and the affidavits I had enclosed to him, observing that they came to hand in good time, and said that he had received compensation from government for his losses in America, in three dividends ; desiring me to remember whose daughter I was, and at his death I should have something handsome. At this time I was mother of five children, two sons and three daughters. Mr. Fisher at this time was fully determined to quit business, and become a land speculator. In March, 1788, he left Montreal, and went home to England to purchase land from one David Milligan, who had land in Washington county, state of New-York ; he purchased those lands and returned to America the year following. He then left Montreal and resided in the United States where his lands

were, and left me in Montreal with my small family to shift for myself. My trial was hard, for he left me no support when he went away, excepting some outstanding debts for me to collect, which came in very slow, he being absent, and I a woman. He took all the cash that was in the house with him. After three years absence he wrote me a letter, desiring me to come and bring the children with me, as he had a good home for us ; accordingly I sold all off and went to him, expecting to find every thing ready for my reception ; but great was my disappointment when I arrived and found him living with his sister in a small log house ; instead of having a home, I was obliged to hire two rooms of a Mr. Smith, for myself and family ; there I remained one year. I took with me plenty of clothing and provisions. Seeing myself unprovided for, I repented that I had broke up house-keeping, and was determined to return to Montreal and try to get a living for myself and children. When Mr. Fisher found it was my wish to return, he and his sister's children took every thing from me, even my clothing, and I had to make my escape by night. After this I never lived with Mr. Fisher as a wife. When I returned to Canada I hired a house and took in work for a living, as I had nothing else to depend on. My father and brother paid no attention to my wants ; my eldest son being now sixteen years of age, and having all the education that I could give him, I bound him to Mr. Isaac Todd, merchant, who took him to the country, where he is now married to his second wife, and is father of five children. I am informed that he is a man of a handsome interest. My youngest son continued at school, and my daughter I kept at home. I found I could not support

myself and family in a city by industry, and having lived a few years before in a state of affluence, I could not bear the idea of staying in Montreal; and to return to Mr. Fisher I would not. I spent days and nights thinking what I should do, and at last concluded to go to Hebron and live on my father's patent, as I thought I could do better in a country place. I left Montreal and went there; when I came there I made a bargain with Daniel Plumley for his house and farm, for three hundred pounds; this was for his improvements, as I thought the soil was mine. I came there the ninth of March, 1798; the twenty-first of September following, Mr. Fisher, after a few days illness, departed this life. On his death bed I visited him frequently; he seemed hurt to think he had behaved to me in the manner I have related, but said it was the fault of his relations; they advised him to it; he hoped I would forgive him. After his death I seemed to be more reconciled, for he was a great trouble to me when living. My daughter Eliza and myself lived together very happy.

Without observing the order of time, I must go back and relate some circumstances which may not be uninteresting to the public. I at first thought it best to omit them; but as they tend to fill some chasms in the foregoing narrative, and as it is my object to give a correct outline of my history, I will here relate them.

In the year '90, I received a letter from Mr. Fisher to meet him at Caldwell's Manor, on Lake Champlain, in which he desired me to bring the children with me to see him. I took my children and a negro girl to wait on us, and went to see Mr. Fisher. After staying there a week, I thought it time to return, as we had to put up at his half

brother's, who was a poor man. The next day I hired a sleigh to take us home. When he saw I was determined to go, he took my negro girl and sold her to one Joseph Mott, for seventy pounds, who took her to his house. I thought hard of Mr. Fisher's conduct towards me, knowing that I had our children to take care of. I took my children and set off for home. As I was riding along, I formed a plan which I was determined to put in execution. I ordered the driver to stop at a Mr. Duer's, which was about eight miles from the British lines. I delivered my children, my pocket-book with papers, and my money, excepting what I might want, to Mr. and Mrs. Duer, and told them, that if any thing should happen to me, to send my children and property to Mr. Fisher, at Montreal, who was nephew to my husband; they promised they would. The children were put to bed, and knowing nothing of my departure, fell asleep. I ordered the sleigh to be in readiness, and borrowed a great coat and fur cap of John Lockard Wiseman, and set off with a full intent to "conquer or die." I told the man what I was going to do, and desired him not to expose himself, as I should act as I thought proper. We set off from Mr. Duer's about eight o'clock in the evening, and rode on the lake as the ice was good. On passing Wind-mill Point, we observed a number of people in a tavern. I wanted to know if Mr. Fisher or Mr. Mott were to be there; accordingly I left the sleigh on the ice, walked in the house, and called for a glass of gin; while there I had a full view of the company. I knew them—neither Mr. Fisher nor Mr. Mott were there; but I was informed at this place that Mr. Fisher had taken a wench from his wife and sold her to Mr. Mott, and that he had gone to Mr.

Mott's to stay till he should return to the States. I was pleased at this information, and went on in pursuit of the negro girl who loved me beyond expression. I arrived at Mr. Mott's about two o'clock in the morning ; I then ordered the driver to turn the sleigh, and be ready to start as soon as the girl got into it. I walked up to the house, and knocked at the door—no one answered. I took hold of a string, opened the door, and went in. Mr. Fisher was lying in bed, and the girl before the fire on the floor. When Jane saw me she got up and began to cry. I whispered her to be quiet. Mr. Fisher awoke, and got up, saying he well knew my business, but I should find myself mistaken. You want Jane, said he, but shall not have her, for I have sold her to Mr. Mott. I spoke very little. All the family got up while Jane was making the fire ; I told her to jump into the sleigh ; she took the hint, and went out of the door ; seeing the sleigh, she got in, when they went off and left me setting by the fire. Hearing the sleigh make a noise on the ice, and missing Jane, every one ran to the stable for a horse, and galloped after it. They overtook the sleigh and brought it back to a tavern ; they beat the man almost to death, took his sleigh from him, and made him a prisoner. This tavern was about two miles from the place where I found Jane. I saw them return and pass by. Unable to procure a sleigh, I set out on foot, and arrived at the tavern about day-light. I found the man lying on a bench, the girl was confined in the house, and the horses and sleigh locked up in the stable. I spoke to Mr. Gregor (for that was the man's name who owned the horses and sleigh) and told him not to go to sleep, but to lie still until I should give the signal for him to be ready. He did so ;

I went into the bar-room where a large company had assembled to hear the news. When Mr. Fisher saw me there he said to me, "Well, madam, you thought you would get Jane, but you shall not; I will let you know that I am your master; and as for Mr. Gregor, he shall go to jail, and lose his sleigh and horses." I said little, but thought a great deal.

I saw they were all drinking very freely, and Mr. Fisher by this time being under full sail, I called for egg-nog, insisting on the company to drink; as I had lost, it was my treat, for they had had a great deal of trouble with me all night. About eight o'clock in the morning they all felt fatigued, and went to take a nap—no sleep was near me. When all were at rest, I called the landlord and asked him what I had to pay; he told me that I had paid him. I then asked him to walk out with me; he went with me out of the house, when I informed him what had happened during the night, told him that I wanted him to go to bed, and permit me to take the sleigh and horses out of his barn, and my wench out of his garret, and make my escape. If you will comply, said I, you shall be well paid for it. I then put two half-joes into his hand, and he went to bed. I went to the man and desired him to go to the barn and fix his sleigh and horses as quick as possible. While he was doing this, I went into the garret and awoke the wench; the sleigh being ready, the wench and myself jumped in, and away we went; we never stopped till we came to Mr. Duer's house, where I had left my children the day before. When we arrived there it was three o'clock in the afternoon. Mrs. Duer got tea for us. I paid her for her trouble, returned my borrowed coat and cap to Mr. Wiseman, took my children, and proceeded on my journey to the Isle of Noah,

where we spent that night, being then out of danger. The next day we arrived home in Montreal. I paid Mr. Gregor for his trouble, and he returned home to his family. I was determined this should be my last visit to Mr. Fisher, unless I could go alone.

Some time after this I was washing some things for the use of my family, and sent Jane to a grocery to buy me some starch; on her way she was taken by an officer, and carried to prison, as being the property of the person to whom Mr. Fisher had sold her. I thought the girl stayed a long time with the starch, and sent after her; I was told that she had been put in jail. This surprised me, because I knew not what it could be for. As the officer was taking her across the parade, my eldest son, passing by, and seeing Jane in his custody, concluded to follow them. Jane was left below while the officer went up stairs to make his report—my son bid her run home, which she did. When I got up (for I was so much overcome with trouble that I had lain down on the bed to reflect on my unhappy fate) I saw Jane coming in at the back gate; she told me what had happened. I then sent her away from me until such time as I could get a master for her. A few days afterwards I sold her to one Simon Clark in Montreal for thirty pounds, and gave him a bill of sale of her.

This wench was made a present to me by my step mother, in the year '85, when she was about six years of age. I know not whether my conduct, in accepting this wench, will be received with approbation by the public; but as I wish to give a correct account of all I can recollect, nothing shall be intentionally omitted, whether it be for or against me.

In this year ['85] I came from Montreal to New-York to see my brother, after his return from England, where he had been with his uncle, John Jay. I found him at Bedford, studying law with John Strong, Esq.; he was then a lad of about nineteen years of age.—I was happy to see him. The Jay family all treated me very well; even my step-mother seemed happy to see me, and made many inquiries after my father. She wished me to write to him, and beg him to write to her, “for,” said she, “I have frequently written to him, but have received no answer, which makes me very unhappy.” I promised her I would.

I spent the winter in New-York. On my return in the spring, I wrote to my father and informed him of my visit to New-York, and how kindly I was received by Mr. Jay's family; what a promising youth my brother was, and how happy I was in seeing him. I likewise informed him how desirous my stepmother was that he should write to her; and observed that she was sensible of her ill conduct towards me when under her care; how she had confessed that her conscience upon reflection made her very unhappy, and begged my forgiveness, saying, that if I could forgive her, she would die in peace. I forgave her, and begged of my father also to forgive her. Upon which he wrote to me in the following manner:

“ My Dear Betsey,

“ You write me that you have been to New-York to see your brother and the Jay family. I am surprised that you can write or correspond with a family that has abused your father in the manner they have done. My wish is that you will have nothing to say to any of them. I

never will write to Mrs. Munro for many reasons, and I wish you not to make mention of her in your letters to me. I thought you had a better spirit than to wish to correspond with your father's bitter enemies."

I confess my feelings were hurt at his letter. I thought he was cruel towards his wife, but did not understand the cause; I knew they did not live happy when together. After that, when I wrote I never made mention of any of that family, for fear of hurting his feelings.

I must here give my readers some account of my conduct during the time I lived with my step-mother, she being so cruel, I was always on my watch to do her all the mischief I could. She had a parrot that she used to learn to tell every thing that passed when she was gone from home. One day our hired women expected company to drink tea—they went into the cellar and took butter and flour to make some cake—Poll was very quiet—they drank tea and went away; some of the cake being left, they put it in a basket and hung it up in the kitchen—my mother came home, and went into the kitchen, when Poll began to talk, "cake, basket—cake, basket mistress." My mother went and took down the basket, and found the cake, for which the servants got a severe reprimand. I had been playing in the yard, and with a stone I knocked over one of her little bantum hens. I was for throwing it into the necessary, but the servants requested me to give it to them—they threw it into the oven. When my mother was done scolding about the cake, Poll cried out "oven—chicken—oven—chicken." She opened the oven and found the fowl—she began to inquire how it came there; they told her that as I was playing in the gar-

den, I went to drive out the hen and by accident hit it with a stone and killed it, they had taken it to cook. I was called for ; nothing would excuse me from a whipping, and I got it severely. I was determined from that moment to be the death of the parrot, when opportunity would serve.

One evening as my mother had gone out to supper, I was trying to discover some method to kill the parrot without its coming to the knowledge of the servants ; at length I hit upon one, which was, to give her fat meat with salt on it. When my mother came home, the parrot was sick, and in the morning she died—at this I secretly rejoiced.

Every summer my step-mother and her son went to New-York, to see their relations—I was always left at home. When they returned, they would bring home birds, dogs and many other things to amuse themselves with. At one time they brought home a slut of which she was very fond ; the slut, by her orders, slept in the entry every night, and if she made any dirt, it was my business to clean after her ; I at length got very tired of this employment, and was determined, if possible, to put an end to her life.

One morning, my step-mother got up earlier than usual, and found my morning's work unfinished, for which she gave me a whipping ; the same evening I saw an old carman that I knew, to whom I made my complaint ; he told me he would assist me in getting rid of the slut—accordingly, that night, it being moon-light, he came and got the slut to follow him—he took her some distance from the house, and killed her. Great inquiry was

made after the slut, and a reward offered, but she never appeared ; so my labour in this business ended to my great satisfaction.

We had another dog for my brother's pleasure. This one I had to feed, and when lost, to find him. One day Penny, (for that was his name,) was missing. I was told to look for him, but as I could not find him, I did not dare to go home ; what to do in this predicament, I knew not, but was fully bent on killing the dog if I should find him. At last the dog came home, which occasioned great joy with mother and son, but not with me, for I yet felt the smart of the whipping I received for not finding him. At night, when my brother was asleep, I drowned the dog. The next morning I was again sent to look for him, *but could not find him*. I told a little boy where he was, and desired him to go and tell the news, which he did ; the dog was carried home and decently buried.

My mother was a woman who thought that if the dogs barked at night, some one was coming to rob her. She slept up stairs by herself ; whenever the dogs began to bark, she would open the window, clap her hands and cry out "catch him, Cloe ! catch him, Cloe !" This was her slut's name. One night as I lay in bed, I thought I would do something to frighten the old lady ; so just before day I got up and took the key of the store-house, and opened the doors and windows—I upset every thing I was able to lift, and threw several pieces of meat out of the door and window. I left them open, and hung up the key in the same place where I got it, and went to bed again, watching the motions of my mother. A little after day, she got up and looked over towards the store-house, and saw the door and windows all open—she ran

down in her chemise, and told my father the store was broken open, and robbed of every thing ; over they both went, with very little clothing on them, for they were in too great a hurry to put on any. They saw pork and beef laying outside of the door ; after taking a thorough view, they returned to the house, and calculated their loss—by their account, they had lost a great deal, but in fact they did not lose the value of a cent. After breakfast my father went and ordered the printers to put up advertisements through the town, and offered five pounds reward for the thief ; he then went to the blacksmith's and ordered him to put iron bars across the door and windows, but no thief was discovered. I would often ask my father if he had found out the thief: No, child, said he, I wish I could. I had a mind to tell him it was me, but was afraid of making him angry. He never knew who it was. I did it to vex my mother ; but was sorry for my father.

In the year '89, having business in the states, I left Montreal, and crossed Lake Champlain. On my arrival, Mr. Fisher, who was there at that time, came to the landing to see me ; at our meeting he was introduced to a young man who had lived in my house in the capacity of a merchant. Mr. Fisher gave this gentleman an invitation to his house to spend a few days, which he did. After some days had passed, I perceived by Mr. Fisher's discourse that he was unhappy on account of this man's having been in company with me on board of the vessel. He was advised by his nephew to ask this man, if he was willing to be qualified before a justice, that he had no criminal connexion with me during the passage over the lake. The young man, was surprised at this re-

quest, but consented to give every satisfaction in his power to appease the mind of Mr. Fisher. 'Squire Sheldon was the man sent for to do the business. I was present. After the young man had taken his oath, these questions were put to him : Did you ever, at home or abroad, have any carnal knowledge of my wife? He replied no. In my absence, as you boarded in the house, did you ever see any man pay attention to my wife in a criminal way? No, sir, I never did. He was asked many more questions of the same nature, till he and his nephew were satisfied. The 'squire got his dollar for administering the oath, and returned home, leaving us to think what we pleased on this subject. As for my part, I cannot express my feelings. The young man asked Mr. Fisher if he was satisfied; Mr. Fisher said yes. He then proceeded on his journey to Boston. After he was gone, I asked Mr. Fisher what he meant by such conduct—If he and I had any knowledge of each other, said I, do you think he would confess it—or do you think I would? No, my dear man, I never would; and for what has passed, you and I must bid adieu to each other. It may well be conjectured, how unhappy I felt on this occasion. I was bent on going home as soon as possible, never to return more. After my return home I met with more trouble. I left White-Hall with capt. Gilbert—we had three passengers besides myself. We set sail with a fair wind, and arrived at Burlington about sunset. Our boat being nothing but a small barge, we concluded to stay at Burlington that night. We supped and spoke for lodgings; but the captain ordered us on board again by ten o'clock at night; there being no woman on board but myself, I refused going, but the captain insist-

ed so hard upon our going that we all consented and went on board. By this time the wind was very high; the captain said however there was no danger. When we got into the bay, which is very wide, (I think twenty two miles) it was midnight, and every one had to take his turn at the pump. The captain, having liquor on board, drank so freely that he lost his way. At three o'clock in the morning we found ourselves at the lower end of the bay, among the rocks, expecting every instant to go to the bottom—at last we struck, and immediately filled with water. By jumping overboard, and getting on the rocks, we were saved from being drowned. When day appeared, we sat on a high rock, and saw at a distance a canoe—we hoisted a signal of distress, which was my white pocket handkerchief, that being all we had left, having lost in the storm the whole of our baggage, excepting a small box of papers belonging to Captain Grant who was in Montreal, which had drifted on shore. We were taken off the rock and put ashore five miles from Cumberton Head, where we had to go for breakfast—wet and wearied as we were, those five miles we had to walk through a wood, and only a foot path. We reached there about ten o'clock in the morning, and got some refreshments. The men went in search of another boat, and I went to bed and slept till five o'clock in the evening; I then got up and went on board, when we sailed for St. Johns, where I thought myself at home. The next day I took stage for Montreal.

Having left my eldest daughter with her father in the country, on account of her ill health, she being a weekly child, I was very anxious to go and bring her home; the ice being good, and plenty of snow, I took a sleigh

and went for her. When I came there, I found her very sick ; after staying there ten days she died. When Mr. Fisher saw me going to return, he forbade the man taking me with him.—I insisted on going, and go I did. We went about eight miles, when an officer stopped us and made us prisoners, and bound us over to appear at court. I had to give bail to the amount of five hundred pounds for the man. The court sat the next day, and a great crowd of people were gathered to hear the trial. The man was charged with taking me away, being the wife of Mr. Fisher, and with having Mr. Fisher's property with him—Mr. Fisher was present with his nephew—I plead my own cause, and likewise the man's, who was almost frightened to death, for fear he should loose his horses and sleigh. The court opened about six o'clock in the evening, and dismissed us about ten o'clock at night. I gained the cause, and took my departure from thence for Montreal.

By these trials it may be seen what I suffered in a married state.—What I have gone through since the death of Mr. Fisher, the following will show.

In the year 1800 I was advised to try the virtue of the deed I had in my possession for many years. I sent for a lawyer and took his advice, which was to serve writs of ejectment on two or three of the tenants, and that would settle the validity of the title. I did so ; the tenants that were on the land held a lease from my brother, Peter Jay Munro, as their landlord. On my brother's hearing what I had done, he came up to Hebron in company with Samuel Young ; he did not stop at my house, but rode past, and put up at a Mr. Daniels. The day after his arrival he sent Mr. Young to my house

to ask me to come to Mr. Daniels to speak with him. I told Young I would not—that if Mr. Munro had any business with me, I was at home, and he might come and see me. He came, accompanied by Mr. Young, and after sitting a few minutes, asked me what I had been about. I told him I wished to try titles with him. He asked me if I was willing to show the deed; I said yes, and went to my trunk, and gave him the deed to read. He asked me concerning the witnesses. I gave him every information in my power who they were, and where they lived. My brother went with Mr. Young to his house. The next day he came again, and asked me many questions. I gave every information in my power. A few days after this he made some proposals to me, which I rejected, thinking he wanted to take advantage of me. I knew at the same time that my father had given him a quit-claim of the same property I held the deed of. He went away much displeased with me.

After my brother parted with me in Hebron, he went to Albany, entered a complaint, and had me taken prisoner and carried to Albany jail, where I remained from the 27th of October, till the ninth of March, at which time I was tried upon a charge of forgery—and a man by the name of John Nira Smith, to my utter astonishment, swore that he saw that deed executed in Rupert, in the State of Vermont, by Adonijah Crane. This evidence, being so pointed, I was sentenced to the state's prison for life. In a few days I left Albany and came to the New-York state's prison, and arrived on the 19th of March, but could not believe that I was to be a prisoner till I found the keys turned on me. I thought my brother could not be so cruel as to imprison a poor widow woman, who had suffered every thing but death, by hav-

ing a cruel step-mother, a disagreeable partner in life, and left to an unfeeling and unpitying world, with three children, to do the best I could for a living. Such thoughts made me think my brother would be merciful. But no, his heart was untouched with mercy—I was to be immured in a prison for life. Caring not for a life thus devoted, I behaved very bad for a few days, for my wish was that they would punish me with death. I went in on Friday. On Monday the inspectors thought proper to place some confidence in me—they put the women prisoners under my command, which command I received with reluctance, but was pleased, nevertheless, with this mark of distinction. I should be wanting in my duty, if I passed by, without making known to the public the attention with which I was treated—they seemed to try to make me happy. After I had received my orders from Thomas Eddy and John Murray, I was desired by them to make choice of a room for myself, and a person to attend me. My provisions were sent me from the head keeper's table. I lived well, and was used well in every respect; but still, in the solemn midnight hour, when all my family were asleep, instead of taking rest, I would walk the lonely hall, and view those dreary cells wherein I was confined from the world—and for what, I knew not. Often at such times did I read the history of Joseph in the Bible, it being so similar to mine. After I had taken charge of these poor wretches, I called them all together in a large room, and spoke to them in this manner :

“ Fellow Prisoners,

“ As fate has decreed that I am to be one of this unhappy family, and the commanders of this place having

thought proper to appoint me an assistant keeper, my sincere wish is that you will endeavour to obey their orders in every respect ; and in obeying their's you will obey mine, for I shall require nothing from you that will be contrary to their orders to me ; and by this method you will obtain their good will, and the good will of a woman who will have your welfare at heart, and will make it her study to make every thing as agreeable to you as this place will allow, hoping your conduct may be such, that whenever I am called upon to make a report, it may be favorable. My rules I will lay down before you, and you must be governed by them. If you refuse, I shall be obliged to compel you to submit."

I then took my station, and every thing went on very quiet ; they were very fond of me, yet feared me, and never refused doing what I ordered them to do. I had the privilege of walking in the yard and garden, which made my time pass more agreeably. I enjoyed good health during my confinement, which was from the nineteenth of March, 1801, till the third of June, 1806. Gov. Lewis then thought proper to sign a pardon, and set me at liberty. I parted from my family with sorrow, because I was going to leave them in confinement. During my imprisonment, my conduct met with universal approbation. I heard no complaints, and parted with them in friendship. After delivering up every thing I had in charge, I took my leave, and went before the inspector, who gave me ten dollars. I am not mistress of language to express my feelings on going out of the gate. I came out alone.—I knew no person ; I did not even know the way to town, and was altogether at a loss what to do.

I felt nearly as bad coming out, as I did going in. I met with a friend who lived a small distance from the prison ; he took me to his house, and made me welcome, till I could better myself. The next day I went to town to see my brother, but he refused to speak to me. I lived at this friend's house two months—during which time I had an offer of marriage from a man that I am sure would have made me a good husband ; but I had no affection for him, and for that reason I would not have him. I knew what it was to marry a man one does not love, After two months I hired two rooms in the city, and took in needle work of all kinds, and worked late and early to get a living. I made out to live decently. I kept no help. During the last four years I have written many letters to people who were under many obligations to me in former days, relating my situation, but to my great surprise, received no answer, which makes the old proverb true, “prosperity makes friends, and adversity tries them.” I have now been four years from prison ; my brother has never stepped forward to assist me in any shape, and my children seem to have forgotten that I am their mother. Since my confinement, I have suffered many an hour of affliction in seeing my children possess such unnatural dispositions towards me, who would go any lengths to serve them. Till now, I have been frequently asked why I did not try to make friends with my brother ? I will leave it to himself if I have not condescended to the utmost to accomplish it ; but nothing will do—I must set out with a resolution to gain a living for myself, and think no more of brother nor children. Hard is the task, but I am determined to do it. I believe the public in general will say that I have stood my trials through life with great forti-

tude. I feel for my brother, for I am sure he cannot be a happy man. I am sure, on reflection, he must feel hurt. He is father of a family ; he must feel for his children ; so must I, when torn from them and cast into a prison to drag out a miserable existence, forever a disgrace to myself and children. He must feel wretched on reflecting that it adds neither credit to himself nor to his family. I am his sister, and he cannot deny it. I am all the sister he ever had. My father, I hope, is in heaven ; but I cannot avoid reprehending his conduct to me while living. To say one thing to me, and to say and do another, quite contrary, to my brother—writing to me not to correspond with my brother, nor any of the Jay family, saying they were his enemies, and at the same time corresponding with them himself, is conduct that cannot be justified ; it has been, I believe, the whole cause of my brother's going to such extremities with regard to the property ; but as he was a man of fortune, there surely was no necessity of practising upon me so much cruelty. If this world was offered me to make me treat him as he has me, I would not do it. What is property ? It is only lent, and we must soon leave it ; then we shall no more contend who shall have the most—no state's prison to be sent to if we cannot agree—no false witnesses to swear against us. I never blamed the judge for my sentence, for the evidence was so pointed against me that they could not do otherwise. I have been told by a gentleman in this town, that if I would behave myself, my brother would not see me want for any thing. I wish I knew what kind of behaviour he wishes. I have been four years living in New-York, and I defy any person to say any thing that is disrespectful of my conduct. I have

always lived in a decent neighbourhood, my conduct must be known by them, and by them I am willing to be judged. I want nothing from him, and if I did I do not think I should get it; for I know his heart; I have full experience of his *good will* towards me and my family; my innocent children feel the smart of his conduct more than I do at this present time—for I am advanced in years—it matters no great with me which way things go while I remain. But my children, just stepping on the stage of life, to have such a slur of character on them as to be told—“your mother has been in the state’s prison for **FORGERY**!” My readers, you who have become parents, how does this impress your minds? Who among you does not feel for me and for them? What an uncle! What a cruel brother! What an inconsiderate father! For his children must sooner or later have it cast up to them that their father put his sister, their aunt, in prison for forgery. Who among you would purchase property at so dear a rate? During this life it can never be paid—the world cannot compensate me for what I have undergone. While in confinement, I had the pleasure of receiving a visit from the Rev. Dr. Peters, who had lately come from London; he knew me from my infancy, and asked me what was the cause of my confinement; when I had told him, he was surprised, saying that my father informed him that he had given his daughter a deed of two thousand acres of land. You will read his letter to me after my liberation—the contents are as follows:

“The Rev. Harry Monro said in London, in 1778, that he had given to his daughter, Elizabeth Fisher, his patent right of two thousand acres of land in the county of

Albany, eastward of Saratoga, that being all in his power to give her, and he feared it would be confiscated, because she and her husband were royalists ; but as to his son, he said he had a rich mother, and the Jay family would take care that he should want for nothing.”*

This has been a dear gift to me ; I never wish to receive any more such.

I am told my father left a will, but I have not seen it ; one copy was sent to my brother, the other to Montreal while I was in prison, so that it fell into the hands of my children ; and ever since that time I was deprived of seeing them—they seem to act towards me with great coolness.—But why ? Because I have been unfortunate and become poor. I shall now leave them to God and the world. From this day I will deny all family connexion. A hard sentence from a parent ; but who, my candid reader, I again appeal to you, who, treated as I have been, would not do the same ? Ten long years in a state of affliction and misery, and not so much as one of them to enquire after their mother, or even to send a letter to me ; and having been at liberty these four years, not a word have I received from them, till last summer my youngest son came to New-York to see my brother, on some business, and called on me, not as a mother, but as a stranger. He told me his brother Harry was a man of fortune—had married his second wife, and was father of five children. My readers may see by this that their ingrati-

* See also the Rev. Samuel Peters' letter stating this fact to Dr. Graham and Sir James Jay.

tude did not proceed from want, but from disposition. I think hard of my brother's conduct ; but it is not to be compared with that of my children. Only reflect on them—for you that are become parents must acknowledge that I have a cause to disown them forever. My best wishes are for their welfare, and have not the least doubt but sooner or later they will become sensible how much they have neglected me. Let me be what I may, still I am their mother. Can children, let them be ever so kind, repay their mother for what she has to undergo in body and in mind, in bringing them up till they are able to do for themselves? I say they cannot. But I found a friend when I was in distress, which was the Lord ; he did more for me than all of them with all their money—he protected me through all my trials—he gave me health and strength to withstand my enemies—he raised up friends for me every where, in prison and out of prison. I must relate to my readers some incidents that took place while I was in prison. I had been there but three days when a distinction was made between me and the other prisoners—I wanted for nothing but liberty. There was a man, one of the keepers, and a widower, who was very fond of me, and nothing was wanting on his part to make my confinement agreeable. After I was at liberty, he was my friend, and I shall always acknowledge it ; but his friendship turned to love. No man could love a woman more than he did me ; but I must confess I did not love him with that sincere affection which would induce me to become his wife ; many thought me ungrateful in this respect, but I am sure I was not ; for how could that man live happy with me when I did not love him. I am in duty bound to say that he was a sincere friend.

When I was discharged from prison, though a stranger, I never was refused credit. I always mentioned that I had been lately discharged from the state's prison, and my creditors have never troubled me. I enjoy good health, a flow of spirits, and a calm mind—no way disturbed concerning the things of this world, I endeavour to live decent, and to do as I wish to be done by. Instead of my brother doing me harm by sending me to prison, it has been the will of God to order it for my good. I can say with truth, that my heart is weaned from the cares of this world—every soul has my best wishes for its welfare. What a change! I never can be thankful enough for this happy change; for now, whether I have plenty or not to supply my wants, I am easy, for I know God is my friend, and he will, I trust, by my honest endeavours, supply my wants in this life. My sincere wish is that God may be pleased to work such a reformation in the hearts of my brother and my children. I do not wish them to go to the state's prison to obtain this reformation; but I wish this may take place in their hearts, and then they will feel as happy as I do. Although I am in a state of poverty, I am happy. I think I can say without vanity, that I possess a generous heart, and am honorable in all my dealings. I am always happy to have it in my power to serve my fellow-creatures, without interested motives. If in my power to accomplish it, no person should be in want of the real comforts of life—all should be happy in this world.

In a future edition of this work, I shall endeavour to show by letters and affidavits, and leave the public to de-

cide, how far I am guilty or innocent in this unnatural and unhappy circumstance which has taken place between my brother and myself ; but for want of time and money I must now conclude.

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